

Department of Permitting and Inspections

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MEMORANDUM

To: Design Advisory Board
From: Scott Gustin
Re: 136 Sunset Cliff Rd
Date: June 8, 2021

File: ZP-21-223
Location: 136 Sunset Cliff Road
Zone: FD5 **Ward:** 3C
Parking District: Neighborhood
Date application accepted: April 28, 2021, complete May 5, 2021
Applicant/ Owner: Tom LeBoeuf / 136 Sunset Cliff Camp, LLC
Request: Demolish existing camp and replace with new single family home and detached garage.

Overview:

The applicant is seeking approval to demolish an existing seasonal residence and to replace it with a new single family home. A detached garage will also be demolished and replaced with a new detached garage. Existing and proposed structures will be set in similar locations. The driveway will be modified, and new hardscaping in the form of walkways and a patio will be constructed.

The Conservation Board will review this application June 7, 2021. Recommendations of that Board will be provided to the Development Review Board for consideration.

Article 6: Development Review Standards

Part 1, Land Division Design Standards

Not applicable.

Part 2, Site Plan Design Standards

Sec. 6.2.2, Review Standards

(a) Protection of important natural features

The subject property is located along the Lake Champlain shoreline north of Appletree Point. The shoreline is an identified significant natural area. All of the property is affected by the Natural Resource Protection Overlay District, specifically the riparian and littoral conservation zone, which stretches inland 250' from the 95.5' lakeshore elevation. Development will not encroach closer to the lakeshore than present conditions, and the total development footprint will

increase modestly by some 200 sf. Limited tree cutting is proposed as depicted in the landscape plan.

The redevelopment of this property exceeds 400 sf and, therefore, requires a “low mow” zone along the lakeshore proportionate in size to the redeveloped area (with a maximum depth of 50’ and maximum span of 80% of the lakeshore frontage). A total of 2,555 sf of redeveloped lot coverage is included in this proposal. The property has some 200’ of shoreline. There is more than enough room for the low mow zone. Note that the minimum depth of the low mow zone is 15.’ A small section of yard may project into this low mow area and may need to be adjusted. The site plan does not depict the required low mow zone and must.

(b) Topographical alterations

Much of the lot is flat but drops steeply towards the lakeshore along its western boundary. Existing topographic conditions will remain largely unchanged.

(c) Protection of important public views

Distant terminal views of Lake Champlain and the Adirondack mountains will remain essentially unchanged. There are no public views associated with this property. The proposed home is modest in scale, and most mature vegetation will be retained. Its construction will not adversely affect public views from the lake towards shore.

(d) Protection of important cultural resources

The property contains no known archaeological resources. Much of the lakeshore is archaeologically sensitive. If, during construction, artifacts are unearthed, it is the applicant’s responsibility to stop earthwork and to contact the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation for further guidance.

(e) Supporting the use of alternative energy

There is no indication that the proposed home will utilize alternative energy. Solar energy utilization is encouraged. In any event, the home will not adversely impact the actual or potential use of alternative energies by neighboring properties.

(f) Brownfield sites

The subject property is not an identified brownfield.

(g) Provide for nature’s events

As required, an erosion prevention and sediment control plan has been provided to the city’s stormwater program staff. Stormwater runoff will be handled by existing measures. The front door is sheltered under a small overhang.

(h) Building location and orientation

The location of the home remains essentially unchanged. The property has no street frontage; however, insofar as building orientation is concerned, the new home will have a front door facing inland towards a new walkway connecting to the driveway and garage.

This criterion calls for setting garages behind the longest front facing wall of the residence. The intent is for the garage to have a location secondary to that of the residence. In this case, the existing detached garage sits between the residence and the driveway. Lacking any street frontage, there is no front yard. Using for reference the east-facing orientation of the existing and proposed homes, the proposed garage should be set behind the eastern façade of the new home and set closer to the lake. The lakeshore buffer noted above inhibits moving development closer to the lakeshore than existing development. With all of that in mind, the best solution here is to simply retain the nonconforming footprint of the existing garage. Doing so will require rerouting a proposed walkway, but is otherwise achievable.

(i) Vehicular access

An existing driveway will continue to serve the property. Modest changes are proposed to accommodate the new garage; however, as noted above, it may be best to rebuild the new garage on the footprint of the existing garage.

(j) Pedestrian access

This criterion requires that a pedestrian walkway be provided from the front door to the public sidewalk or street. As noted above, this property has no street frontage. A walkway will connect the front door of the residence to the driveway and garage.

(k) Accessibility for the handicapped

No handicap accessibility is evident or required with this proposal.

(l) Parking and circulation

Parking and circulation are provided within the driveway and detached garage.

(m) Landscaping, fences, and retaining walls

Much of the lakeshore is vegetated. Limited tree clearing is proposed inland of the home, and several new trees and shrubs are proposed as depicted in the landscaping plan. The project plans refer to replacement of an existing fence along the top of the lakeshore slope, but no details are provided and are needed. No new retaining walls are evident in the project plans.

(n) Public plazas and open space

No public plaza or open space is included or required in this proposal.

(o) Outdoor lighting

Outdoor lighting fixture cut sheets and locations are included in the project plans. The proposed fixtures are acceptable in terms of illumination, placement, and shielding. Outdoor lighting is limited to building entries and part of the walkway to the front door.

(p) Integrate infrastructure into the design

Utility lines must be buried as part of this reconstruction. Utility meter locations are not evident and must be depicted and screened.

Part 3, Architectural Design Standards

Sec. 6.3.2, Review Standards

(a) Relate development to its environment

1. Massing, Height, and Scale

The proposed home is stylistically altogether different from the existing home. It will utilize a similar footprint; however, it will extend an additional ½ story taller and will incorporate much more ornate fenestration, steeper more complex roof lines, and trim work. The overall scale of the proposed home is similar to other nearby properties. The proposed garage is stylistically similar to the proposed home, but is very similar in scale to the existing garage.

2. Roofs and Rooflines

The proposed home will have a gable roof with gable dormers in front and a shed dormer facing west. Gable roofs, with or without dormers, are common in this, and other, residential neighborhoods. The proposed garage will have a more simplified gable roof.

3. Building Openings

The primary front entrance is clearly articulated and is sheltered by a small overhang. Fenestration is appropriately scaled and stylistically appropriate for the proposed building design.

(b) Protection of important architectural resources

The existing building is not listed on the state or national historic register, nor has it been deemed eligible for listing. Its removal will have no adverse impact on Burlington's wealth of important architectural resources.

(c) Protection of important public views

See 6.2.2 (c) above.

(d) Provide an active and inviting street edge

As with a number of homes along nearby Starr Farm Beach, this home has no street presence. The property contains no street frontage and is oriented, in part, towards the lake. As noted before, the eastern elevation is effectively the home's front façade and incorporates a readily identifiable front entrance and walkway.

(e) Quality of materials

The proposed home and garage will be clad in wooden shingles and trim. Standing seam metal roofing will be installed on both structures. Clad wooden or fiberglass windows will be installed throughout. The materials proposed are of acceptable quality and durability for this new construction.

(f) Reduce energy utilization

The proposed building must comply with the current energy efficiency standards of Burlington and the State of Vermont.

(g) Make advertising features complimentary to the site

No advertising is included in this proposal.

(h) Integrate infrastructure into the building design

Two heat pumps will be installed on the exterior wall of the garage. Given the general lack of public visibility of this property, the proposed heat pump location is acceptable.

(i) Make spaces safe and secure

The proposed building must comply with the city's current egress requirements. Building entries will be illuminated.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Approve the application as conditioned and forward to the Development Review Board.

1. Revise the proposed site plan to:
 - a. Depict the required "low mow" zone of 2,555 sf along the lakeshore and make any necessary adjustments to enable the minimum 15' width from the 100' elevation; and,
 - b. Adjust the location of the proposed garage to that of the existing garage.
2. It is the applicant's responsibility to stop earthwork and to contact the VT Division for Historic Preservation for guidance in the event that artifacts are unearthed.
3. All utility lines must be buried. Utility meter locations must be depicted and screened.